

**Notes from FitRec:
Setting Attainable Fitness Goals for the New Year**

Setting resolutions at the start of a new year can be effective if you create goals that are realistic and fun! The more rigid or extreme the goal is, the less likely it will be that it will be attractive or attainable. Allow yourself to make mistakes and enjoy the process as much as reaching--or even surpassing--your new goals.

Tip 1: When you set new goals, be sure they are realistic. Goals should start out small and short-term. This method increases confidence and helps you stick with a plan. For example, start with just 15 to 30 minutes of cardio a day, take a group exercise class twice a week or bike one day a week to work.

Tip 2: Plan ahead--pack your exercise clothes and take them with you to work, bring healthy snacks to eat throughout the day, use weekends for healthy meal and lunch prep. The key to success is establishing a consistent routine, which eventually becomes a normal part of your day.

Tip 3: Lack of time is the No. 1 reason people abandon healthy habits. Being healthy is not about finding time--it's about being better prepared and making the time. Schedule workout times on your calendar and be consistent. Maintaining consistency creates small and lasting changes over time.

Tip 4: Have fun! Find something active that you enjoy doing -- walking, yoga, Zumba, dance, strength training, cycling and team sports are all great options.

Tip 5: Partner up. People who exercise in groups or with a partner are more likely to stick to a consistent and long lasting exercise program. A workout partner provides motivation, encouragement and accountability.

Tip 6: Avoid the Fad Diets and concentrate on healthy eating. Fad Diets encourage a temporary fix, while healthy eating encourages a long-term lifestyle. Focus on eating less sugary and processed foods and more real whole foods, like nutrient-rich and fiber-dense fruits and vegetables and lean meats.

Tip 7: Drink more water. Our bodies often mistake dehydration for hunger. Drink at least 5-8 glasses of water daily for more energy and to stave off cravings.

Tip 8: Get more sleep. Research suggests that people who sleep less than eight hours a day have more cravings and may make more unhealthy food decisions.

Tip 9: Hire a personal trainer or schedule a session with a dietician. Working with a professional can help you develop a personalized plan for the best results

Tip 10: Beware of shedding pounds too quickly: If your goal is to lose weight, aim for 1 to 2 pounds a week. This will provide the slow and steady type of weight loss that will be long-lasting.

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